



Minnesota Nurses Association

345 Randolph Avenue #200, St. Paul, MN 55102

651-414-2800 / 800-536-4662

Fax: 651 -695-7000 Web: www.mnnurses.org

MINNESOTA NURSES ASSOCIATION MAIN MOTION

MNA Legislative Platform

For more than 100 years, MNA nurses have advocated for their patients and their profession inside the halls of the Federal and State Capitols. Our Legislative Platform provides legislators and political candidates with an overview of the issues that are most important to nurses. Our goals have not changed after more than a century of advocacy in the political arena. As nurses, we want to:

- create and maintain autonomy as patient advocates.
- guide nursing goals in healthcare reform
- deliver safe, quality care while maintaining workers' rights.
- ensure a safe work environment.
- express advocacy for social justice issues.

We use our legislative platform to both educate *and* activate – it provides a quick reference point when nurses from across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa are needed to speak out on any legislation or regulatory action which would have an impact on the nursing profession, patient safety, and nursing activism.

As the most trusted profession in the United States, nurses have an important and influential position in the eyes of legislators and regulators. Over the past 100 years, countless MNA nurses have become involved in our advocacy efforts for precisely that reason – to create the change that we want to see!

The current MNA Legislative Platform is divided into four key areas:

1. Nursing Practice
2. Health Care Reform
3. Labor / Collective Bargaining
4. Social Justice and Health Equity

Each area has guiding principles derived from more than 100 years of MNA House of Delegates resolutions.

The goal of the MNA Legislative Platform is to provide a window into the Minnesota Nurses

Association's legislative agenda and to serve as a guide for future ideas and advocacy efforts that will continue to move nursing forward in Minnesota.

AREA ONE: NURSING PRACTICE

Nurses are invaluable, irreplaceable members of health care delivery, regardless of where care is provided. We maintain nurses have a responsibility as patient advocates, as well as responsibility to self, that includes advocating for workplace safety and the necessary resources to provide the best possible health care. As nurses, we know that in order to take exceptional care of our patients, we must care for ourselves as well!

Scope of Practice

We will oppose all efforts to diminish the role of the professionally-licensed Registered Nurse. We support and recognize the role of the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) within the health care system. We support Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) and advocate for their ability to work to the top of their scope. Finally, we will oppose any attempts by employers to *inappropriately* utilize nursing and health care employee skill mixes in diverse practice settings.

Safe Staffing

MNA advocates for maximum Registered Nurse-to-patient assignment limits. National research studies continue to demonstrate the effectiveness and importance of Registered Nurse-to-patient ratios in ensuring both patient safety and the highest quality nursing care. These limits must be based on patient acuity and nursing intensity, and it is ultimately within the Registered Nurse's professional judgement to determine his or her own ability to accept or reject additional patient assignments. Because of their strong role in protecting the public, MNA seeks a stronger partnership with the Minnesota Board of Nursing (MNBON) in ensuring that hospitals are appropriately and safely staffed by nurses and nurses are not punished for negative outcomes that are a result of unsafe staffing.

The Minnesota Board of Nursing (MNBON) and RN Licensure

The Minnesota Nurses Association supports the MNBON as a regulatory agency that upholds nursing education and practice standards in their regulatory and accountability role of protecting the public. We support the Minnesota Board of Nursing's mission of ensuring that nurses are practicing with the necessary knowledge and skills appropriate to their title and role. We also seek and support a stronger partnership with the MNBON so that we are working in a more collaborative manner to address these issues.

Nurse Privacy and Rehabilitation

MNA works to protect Registered Nurses' privacy, including our right to privacy in rehabilitation. We support the State of Minnesota's Health Professionals Services Program (HPSP) and its efforts to rehabilitate health care professionals while maintaining patient safety. We will work to create a disciplinary record expungement process that allows nurses living in recovery an opportunity to make their disciplinary records private. We also support similar penalties for all Health Licensed professionals when it comes to issues of substance use and its impact on a healthcare professional's ability to perform their assigned duties.

Nurse Discipline

MNA advocates the Minnesota Board of Nursing include at least three board members in making discipline review panel recommendations before they are sent to the full board for final action. We will work to ensure that every discipline review panel includes two Registered Nurse Board of Nursing members at every disciplinary meeting.

Expungement of Nursing Records

MNA supports legislation or rulemaking that would require the Board of Nursing to develop administrative rules or guidelines for expunging certain actions from nurses' public records after a given period of time has passed without further violation.

National Nurse Licensure Compact

MNA vigorously opposes the National Nurse Licensure Compact, as revised in 2015, and as advocated for by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). This national licensure would compromise Minnesota's high-quality nursing standards by issuing an open invitation to any nurse practicing anywhere in the country to come to Minnesota, while ignoring our specific academic and clinical requirements.

Telehealth and Telenursing

MNA supports education and research into the role of nurses in telehealth and its potential applications in safe and effective nursing care. MNA supports the use of telehealth or increase access to healthcare, but not at the cost of decreasing the standards of nursing practice. MNA believes that nurses must be involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of telehealth technology. Lastly, MNA believes that telehealth ought to be advanced in a manner that addresses healthcare disparities.

Health and Safety

MNA works to inform all RNs and healthcare workers about their right to demand protections from hazardous drugs and other substances, biohazards, infectious disease, and to advocate for ergonomics in the workplace. We will maintain and uphold safe patient handling requirements and work to nationalize those standards. We will also work to protect ourselves and our patients from all violence and intimidation in the workplace and to train workers to intervene when witnessing such behavior.

Nursing Education

MNA wants to increase accessibility to and affordability of nursing education, as well as support efforts to recruit and retain top-notch nursing faculty. We support all efforts by nurses to continue education, whether in person or online, according to their professional goals, and we will work to remove barriers that inhibit such education. We encourage additional funding for nursing education programs and the funding of state and federal studies regarding nursing workforce trends.

Public Health

We support the role of Registered Nurses as Care Coordinators and promote the role nursing plays in facilitating recovery, creating wellness, and promoting health in communities.

Long-Term Care and Assisted Living

Registered Nurses are essential in both traditional and non-traditional health care settings, including, but not limited to: in-home care, transitional care, assisted living, long-term care, and group home care. We promote the use of practice standards and coordination and continuity of care by requiring RNs to be part of the interdisciplinary team that develops personal support plans and care plans.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

MNA nurses work to remove barriers, standardize credentialing, and encourage the appropriate utilization of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses as essential partners on the health care team.

Nurse Emeritus Status

MNA supports allowing the Board of Nursing to grant emeritus status to nurses in good standing who wish to retain their licenses and titles but voluntarily give up their right to practice.

AREA TWO: HEALTH CARE REFORM

The Minnesota Nurses Association will work to achieve a single payer delivery system which provides health care, including mental health, reproductive, and preventative care, as a right for all Minnesotans regardless of ability to pay. This ensures affordability and accessibility to all while preserving the right of health care for all patients and the health and wellness of all Minnesotans.

Single Payer

MNA believes that a single payer healthcare delivery system is the only way to ensure that all patients, regardless of income and health status, will receive appropriate care. We will work towards a single payer system by building pillars of the single payer system, which include ensuring that all Minnesota residents are covered for all necessary care, including dental, vision and hearing, mental health, chemical dependency treatment, prescription drugs, medical equipment and supplies, long-term care, and home care. This plan must allow patients to choose their providers and set premiums based on ability to pay. A single payer system should also include payment reform and removing HMOs and private insurance companies from public programs so that the state contracts directly with providers for services.

HMO Transparency

MNA nurses will continue to demand the state's current managed care system is transparent and accountable and that health care reimbursement is based on health outcomes, not surveys. This demand for transparency includes transparency in the pricing of healthcare services.

Observation Status

MNA supports efforts to prevent misuse and abuse of observation status as a cost savings means by healthcare facilities and providers. Additionally, we support all efforts to ensure that patients are aware of the financial impact of being on observation status.

Accountable Care Organizations

We support the goal of Accountable Care Organizations: delivering high-quality care that puts the interest of the patient first. However, we believe that the Registered Nurse is central to delivering high-quality care and we will monitor implementation of ACOs to make sure that the fundamental role of the Registered Nurse is recognized and protected. We will also monitor ACO's to make sure patient care is actually improved, any recorded savings is real, and evidence clearly demonstrates their value related to financial incentives that improve patient outcomes, not financial disincentives that increase health disparities.

Medical Debt Collection

We will work to support data privacy and vehemently oppose patients being subjected to debt collection while receiving medical treatment or spending time in the hospital as a patient. Additionally, we oppose healthcare delivery system ownership of and partnership with debt collection agencies.

Public Programs

We will support efforts to protect and fully fund existing public programs that promote health, wellness, and quality care for all. This includes working to reinstate the provider tax, an important source of revenue for Minnesota public healthcare programs.

Corporatization of Health Care

MNA opposes any corporatization of the health care delivery system that puts profits before patients. MNA also opposes increased hospital consolidation, which leads to necessary services being stripped from rural communities and shuttled to larger facilities for the purposes of profit. Further, MNA supports holding nonprofit health care organizations accountable to their mission and defined legislative purpose of providing a community benefit to the public that includes uncompensated care.

AREA THREE: LABOR / COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Minnesota Nurses Association believes in the workers' right to organize a union and collectively bargain a contract. We will oppose any and all efforts to silence employees' collective voices in their workplace, including the anti-union effort to make Minnesota a "right to work" state.

Strike Breakers

We oppose any efforts by employers to hire workers who replace union workers in a work stoppage. This includes resisting attempts to make Minnesota a Nurse Licensure Compact state, which would allow nurses to more easily be brought in to replace striking nurses.

Erosion of Collective Bargaining Rights

We oppose all efforts by the legislature and employers to mandate terms and conditions of employment.

Workers' Compensation Policy Reform

While nursing is a rewarding profession, it can also be dangerous. Therefore, we continue to advocate for a robust workers' compensation insurance program so that when workers get hurt, they can receive medical treatment and payment for lost time and disability. This includes expanding workers' compensation to cover any injuries that occur as a result of employer mandates.

Employee Voice in the Workplace

MNA supports the rights of all workers to organize a union. Workers organizing a union should be free from employer intimidation, coercion, threats, and lies. We believe in stronger legal protections for workers who want to organize.

AREA FOUR: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HEALTH EQUITY

The Minnesota Nurses Association, in our ongoing pursuit of social justice, calls for jobs at living wages, guaranteed healthcare, equal access to quality education, a secure retirement, good housing and protection from hunger, a safe and clean environment, and a just taxation system where corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share. MNA's support for social justice issues stems from their intimate understanding that access to benefits like those listed above lead to better health outcomes for all. These benefits also help promote health equity for all.

Human Rights and Equal Rights

We work to guarantee human rights and equal rights for all, regardless of age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender identity, health status, lifestyle, national origin, race, relation, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or familial status.

Main Street Contract

We endorse the Main Street Contract for the American People, which calls for jobs at living wages, guaranteed healthcare, equal access to quality education, a secure retirement, good housing and protection from hunger, a safe and clean environment, and a just taxation system where corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.

Just Taxation

We support policies that work to raise revenue fairly and progressively. We believe in the development of a just taxation system. We also support a Financial Transaction Tax, which will establish a small fee on each Wall Street trade of stocks, credit default swaps, derivatives, or other financial transactions as a means to achieve our goals for social justice, health equity, and the Contract for Main Street.

Protecting the Environment

We support the elimination of any and all environmental health hazards and believe we all have a responsibility to protect our environment.

Affordable Housing

We work for affordable housing and reject the idea that eviction will help with financial rehabilitation. We support funding for emergency shelters and health care for the homeless.

Immigration Reform

America was built on the idea that no matter who you are or where you come from, if you work hard, you can build a life for yourself and your family. We need immigration reform that turns productive taxpaying immigrants into American citizens. MNA believes that all persons, regardless of national origin or immigration status, are entitled to medical treatment. We also believe that all individuals living in our country are healthier and more productive citizens when they have the same rights, including access to healthcare and the ability to fully participate in a community. Any policy that violates a person's right to remain in and contribute to our communities damages the freedom we cherish.

Child Care

We work to support the health, wellness, and education of children by increasing access to affordable child care, health care, and early childhood education. In addition, we support community-based family educational programs (e.g., Early Childhood Family Education).

Chemical Dependency

We believe that all citizens should be given the opportunity and resources to conquer addiction. We support efforts to increase funding for chemical dependency treatment and enact public policy changes to help further the goals of reducing chemical dependency.

Mental Health

MNA will work to assure the provision of a full range of mental health services (i.e., prevention, early intervention, and treatment) for people of all ages and their families in a variety of settings, from independent living to regional treatment centers, according to the specific needs of the client and respecting the client's potential for growth and change. This includes promoting equitable public reimbursement for services provided to clients as well as continued and expanded reimbursement in the private sector. In particular, MNA will work to ensure full funding of children's mental health services as well as support nursing's creativity in designating new approaches to promote access to mental health care.

Safe and Sick Time

Access to earned safe and sick time promotes safe and healthy work environments by reducing the spread of illness and workplace injuries, reduces health care costs, and supports children and families by helping workers to fulfill their caregiving responsibilities. We believe that all employees, regardless of income or employment level, should be entitled to earned safe and sick time.

Minimum Wage

MNA will work to increase the minimum wage to at least \$15 an hour. Raising the minimum wage will help lift many individuals out of poverty. When minimum wage workers get a raise, they often spend those new wages on basic necessities, goods, and services. Raising the wage can also help address racial and economic inequities.

Paid Family Leave

Nearly everyone needs paid family or medical leave at some point in their lives, whether it's to care for a new child, an aging parent, or themselves. MNA believes that individuals should be able to work *and* care for themselves and their families, and that a paid family and medical leave insurance program is a fair, common-sense solution that would let them do both. We advocate for a state-administered program where everyone contributes – both employees and employers – and everyone benefits – workers, families, businesses, and our economy.

Gun Violence Prevention

MNA supports comprehensive legislation that would address the solution to gun violence in its many forms. This includes legislation requiring background checks on all gun sales, no matter how purchased. As a means to reduce gun violence, MNA also supports addressing the availability and funding of mental health and substance abuse treatment so that all individuals who are in need of help have sufficient access to these services.

Submitted by the MNA Commission on Governmental Affairs

Endorsed by the MNA Board of Directors and the E and GW Commission

Adopted by the MNA House of Delegates October 15, 2012

Adopted by the MNA House of Delegates, October 13, 2014

Endorsed by the MNA Board of Directors, September 16, 2015

Adopted by the MNA House of Delegates, October 6, 2015